

Well "Heeled"  
on every  
walking  
trip  
The Foster Plug  
won't  
let you  
slip



## CAT'S PAW

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RUBBER HEELS

Should be on your shoes,  
because—

The Foster Friction Plug not only makes them wear longer, but stands between you and dangerous, slippery sidewalks — you simply can't slip — makes each step sure.

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chief will not be let in on it—it's far too good for an engineer. That's the kind of honorable men you are working for." Hoffman puffed out indignation. "I represent," he went on, his voice smooth again, "a group of gentlemen, some of them stockholders in this road,—men from whom you really draw your pay,—who are interested in this country and want to see it go ahead; men who don't want to hog all the profits. These men know of you and appreciate what you have done up here." He hurried to cover this last sentence; his listener's incredulous smile told him that he had overshot. "If you will help my people sidetrack the dishonest intention of that syndicate, you will be handsomely rewarded."

Francis started to rise, but this time troubled doubt had displaced anger. He wanted to get quickly from the room and his smoothly talking host.

"Just a moment," Hoffman waved a fat hand. "What they ask is done every day in business; it is absolutely legal. I would be the last person to ask a young man to do anything wrong. I merely want you to tell me—to show me that report. In consideration of your services,"—here he reached into his pocket,— "I am to hand this over to you."

Thornton blinked. "Twenty thousand dollars!" he gasped.

"Twenty thousand," answered the smooth Hoffman. "And you will notice this check is certified and drawn to the order of cash."

Francis was too blinded to see the hard glitter that had come into the artless eyes watching intently his frightened face.

"Just figure what that sum represents," the fat man urged gently.

"I can't do what you wish!" Francis cried out the words, and turned toward the door.

"Wait a moment longer," Hoffman's tone was oily, persuasive. "You can hold the check as security and I'll cash it for you after the business is settled. Your signature need not appear."

"I tell you, no!" Francis' voice was hoarse.

"It's ten long years of work at your salary."

"I can not consider the proposition." The boy's face was white, drawn.

"Some of my people are stockholders in your road," Hoffman persisted gently, and pushed the check across the table.

Francis tried not to see it.

"How do you know they won't change the line after you people buy up the land?" he asked, hoping to end the temptation.

"We can prevent that after the directors have once voted," Hoffman said decisively. "Come, now, my young friend, act as any experienced business man in your place would. Close with me."

"What, to-night—now?" The words came in a whisper.

"Certainly, the sooner I turn this twenty thousand dollars"—Hoffman dwelt on the sum—"over to you, the better."

"Will—to-morrow do?" As Francis dragged out the question his face went from white to red.

"Ye-es," answered Hoffman, hesitating, "if I have the information early."

"I'll give you my answer before breakfast." Sweat stood thick on the boy's forehead. He hurried to the door. He was half out of the room when Hoffman, hoping to clinch his persuasions, called after him:

"This twenty thousand will make things pretty snug down in Virginia for your mother."

His mother! Francis came to a dead stop. He went back to Hoffman.

"I've decided to give you my answer now," he said, his voice steady.

"Good! Good!" Hoffman rubbed his fat hands together.

"I will not tell you which line my report recommends."

Each word came slowly, distinctly. The round eyes of the fat man stared. Amazement overspread his full-moon face. For once his smooth flow of words was checked.

As Francis turned to go, Hoffman cried out:

"You'll not throw away twenty thousand dollars?"

No answer came. Francis was at the door.

"But, my boy—"

The young man turned, his face white with rage.

"Don't you dare—you—you hired briber, call me 'my boy'!" His voice shook, and disgust rang in every tone.

The insult left no dent in the smooth face of Hoffman.

"Don't be rash," he persisted; "take time to think it over."

"I am ashamed that I ever thought of it for an instant!" Francis shot out the words.

Hoffman placed his hand on the boy's arm.

"Don't touch me!" Thornton's voice quivered menace. "Take your hand off me!" He raised a clenched fist.

Hoffman drew quickly back. "But look! Look!" From a safe distance he waved the check.

Francis closed the door behind him.

LONG the boy sat motionless in his room, the report before him, untouched. The knuckles of his tightly closed fists pressed hard against his head. Over and over he asked himself, "Have I been a fool?" And ever through his distracted thoughts Hoffman's crafty arguments wove their subtle snare in answer.

Would it have been so wrong to disclose his recommendation, if thereby his act served to upset the plans of men intent on fraud, directors who schemed against the very stockholders who had placed them in trust?

But could he be sure that this was true? Might not all the smooth arguments of the innocent-looking fat man be but lies contrived to blind him to dishonor?

And the money! Every written word, each clearly penned figure, on that luring check stood out clearly to stir his overwrought imagination. By one word he could have acquired the earnings of years of work. What could he not do with \$20,000? Above all, had he the right to throw away this chance to place his mother beyond the risk of want?

The longer Francis thought of what such a sum could accomplish, the nearer he came to believing he had acted like an inexperienced boy.

Perhaps even now it was not too late. And yet—and yet—what would his grandfather have advised?

But he would not let his thoughts stray down that path. His doubts were enough; memories of the dead added only sadness to uncertainty. Yet—if he could only hear his voice for a minute,—an instant,—as long as it would take to cry out "Yes" or "No."

He walked restlessly about the room. Then, sitting at his table, he worked in frantic haste until the report was finished.

Francis folded the papers; his irresolute hand long held the document. Once the envelop was nearly sealed, but at the end he threw it to the table, an open temptation still.

MIDNIGHT had dragged slowly past before sleep came to him. And then, as the night air grew chill, some bit of shrinking woodwork cracked loudly through the still room. He sat up, instantly awake.

"Grandfather!" he called into the darkness. "Grandfather, are you here?"

Slow seconds crept by.

"Grandfather!" he cried eagerly, "if ever I needed you, it is now—now!"

Silence deeper than before followed the cry. Still he waited—waited until anger grew where yearning hope had been.

"Fool! Fool!"

Then, as from a great distance a new thought called—his grandfather's papers! He sat up quickly. He had had no time as yet to look them over. He would get up now and read them. At this time of night? No!

He lay down again. But the longing for his grandfather, the wish to see his written words, was too strong. A second